

## **Judge Monica J. Benton**

Judge Benton was appointed to the King County Superior Court bench in January 2008 by Governor Christine Gregoire. She occupies Department 49, which previously was held by Hon. Linda Lau, now a member of Division 1 of the Washington Court of Appeals.

Judge Benton began her legal career as judicial law clerk to Hon. Jack Tanner, the first African American judge to serve on the bench of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington. She then practiced for 10 years, cumulatively, in the Criminal Division of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Department of Justice, Fraud Section, Criminal Division. In 1995, she was appointed to the King County District Court bench, where she served for five years. In 2000, she was appointed to serve as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington, becoming the first African-American woman to serve on that court.

Judge Benton earned her law degree from Southwestern University School of Law. She is a past-president of the Loren Miller Bar Association. Judge Benton has been the recipient of the Loren Miller Bar Association's Lifetime Achievement Award and the Vanguard Award from the King County Chapter of Women Lawyers, as well as the Norm Early Founder's Award from the National Black Prosecutors Association. In 2004, Seattle University School of Law named her 'Woman of the Year.' She has served as a faculty member of the Washington State Judicial College, focusing on cross cultural competency, diversity, and access to judicial forums.